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SAINT GILES

Biog

SAINT GILES

THE PATRON SAINT OF
ANCIENT EDINBURGH

BY D. BUTLER, M.A., D.D.

AUTHOR OF "LIFE OF ARCHBISHOP
LEIGHTON," "SCOTTISH CATHEDRALS
AND ABBEYS," "SAINT CUTHBERT," ETC.

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THE town of Saint-Gilles, 12 miles SSE. of Nîmes in Provence, grew up around the tomb of St. Giles, its patron saint, and pilgrims, Crusaders, Knight-Hospitallers of St. John and Knight-Templars from all parts of Europe visited this shrine, especially in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, carrying on their return home the St. Giles' cult far and wide. Although now a quiet town, Saint-Gilles was a famous centre in ancient days. It is easily accessible from Nîmes and repays a visit, not least of all to the student of history. The history of this interesting town of Saint-Gilles has been recently written by Chanoine Nicolas (ancien Curé de Saint-Gilles), and to this learned work, embodying the most recent research, the present writer desires to express his thanks for much illuminative help received. The saint's cult in Edinburgh is best to be understood in the light of the general development, which enables us to determine the almost certain date of the St. Giles' dedication (pp. 47-49). One thing is certain, that the church was not called the church of St. Giles because it possessed a relic of the saint from about 1454: it received the relic because it had been previously dedicated to St. Giles (p. 51).

D. B.

GALASHIELS, *June* 1914.

SAINT GILES

CONTENTS

PREFACE	7
I. THE PERIOD OF ST. GILES	11
II. THE LIFE OF ST. GILES (640-721 A.D.)	13
III. THE CULT OF ST. GILES	20
IV. PILGRIMAGES TO ST. GILES' SHRINE.	22
V. CRUSADERS, HOSPITALLERS OF ST. JOHN, AND KNIGHT-TEMPLARS AT SAINT-GILLES	27
VI. THE BASILICA AT SAINT-GILLES	36
VII. SAINT-GILLES AND AIGUES-MORTES	39
VIII. THE AREA OF THE ST. GILES' CULT.	42
IX. ST. GILES IN ART	45
X. ST. GILES, EDINBURGH (CHURCH, COLLEGE, AND CATHEDRAL)	47
XI. ST. GILES AND THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION	53
RETROSPECT	57

ST. GILES. THE PATRON SAINT OF ANCIENT
EDINBURGH. I. THE PERIOD OF ST. GILES

WITH the exception of one historian, M. Gaston Paris, who makes St. Giles a native of Provence, without furnishing proof of the statement, all others are agreed that he was born at Athens.* While they are in accordance as to place, they differ as to the period or time when St. Giles lived, and from the standpoint of chronology fall into three groups. The *first* group comprises the chroniclers and biographers of the Middle Ages, according to whom St. Giles flourished in Southern France at the beginning of the eighth century. Some of them even refer his period to the reign of Charlemagne (768–814). These all err by defect of reflection and fall into incredible contradictions in making St. Giles live in the eighth century, placing him in relationship with St. Cæsarius, who was anterior to St. Giles by nearly two centuries. The *second* group is composed of historians who flourished from the end of the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, and according to them, St. Giles was contemporary with St. Cæsarius, Bishop of Arles, who died in 542. They are mistaken, and their error arises in that they confound St. Giles with another abbot of the same name, whom Cæsarius sent to Rome in 514 to Pope Symmachus on a request about the readjustment of the provinces of Southern Gaul, and the privileges of his Metropolitan

* Intro. to "Vie de Saint Gilles" par de Berneville.

See. It is true that the Roman Breviary and the larger part of the liturgies of different dioceses embraced the opinion of these historians, but the Breviary of Arles, belonging to the Diocese of Nîmes, printed in 1501, does not contain a line relating to this supposed connection between St. Giles and St. Cæsarius. Further, according to the advice of Benedict XIV., one could for good reasons not only raise doubts as to the recorded facts of the legends in the Breviary, but even refuse to admit the same. The *third* group comprises the writers from the period, which opens in the middle of the eighteenth century and continues to the present day. In the train of John Stilling, the Bollandist, the chief of this group are Spoerl, Ménard, de Peller, Germain, Teissonier, Trichaud, Goubier, and others. They maintain that St. Giles landed in Gaul in the second half of the seventh century, resided there part of the eighth, and died between 720 and 726. This opinion, which is the best proved and the only admissible one, is generally followed to-day. Stilling in the *Acta Sanctorum** proves by most certain historical documents that St. Giles was the contemporary of another pious hermit, Veredemus (d. 722), who was also from Greece and of whom he became a disciple: that St. Giles' hermitage was on the banks of the Guerdon, a tributary of the Rhone: that he was contemporary of the King of the Visigoths, Flavius Wamba, who discovered our anchorite in

* September I, p. 296.

GILES

the Gothic forest in 673: that he was also contemporary of Pope Benedict II., into whose hands he made gift of his monastery with all its dependencies for the Holy See in 685: that he was also contemporary of Charles Martel, whom he sought at Orleans in 720.

The history of all these legends of the saint agree upon his Greek origin and affirm that the St. Giles, of whom the existence is certain, could not be contemporary with St. Cæsarius or with Charlemagne, for the former died in 542 and the latter became king in 768.

II. THE LIFE OF ST. GILES (640-721 A.D.)

St. Giles (*Aἰγιδιος* dim. form of *αἰξ* or *αἰγίς*, *Ital.* Sant' Egidio, *Span.* San Gil, *French* S. Gilles, *Engl.* St. Giles) was born at Athens about 640. His father was Theodorus and his mother Pelagia, and they were more distinguished for their piety than for the nobleness of their origin. He was early baptized and his parents did not neglect to give to their only child a Christian education. He was soon noted for his piety and works of beneficence. The legends tell that he cured a poor and infirm person by wrapping him in his mantle: healed a man condemned to a terrible death by the sting of a serpent, and cast out a devil from another in the presence of the church. He became the admiration of Athens, and on the death of his parents St. Giles gave all his goods to the poor and fled far from his country to shelter

himself from popular applause. He embarked in a boat, which set sail to the south-west of Gaul, and after a perilous voyage landed at the mouth of the Rhone at Arles, the ancient Metropolitan Church of Roman Gaul, where he healed one who had been afflicted with a fever for three years. He did not stay long at Arles, where theatre, arena, and forum still remaining testify to its ancient splendour, for it appeared to him as but a fresh apparition of Athens. He crossed the Rhone and ascended to the north towards the forest mountains, and halted on the banks of the Guerdon in a deep recess of the valley. He settled in that "aerial grotto of Sanilhac" (grotte aérienne de la Baume de Sanilhac) which to this day unfolds the austerity of the desert with all the majesty of a religious silence. Here he met Veredemus, an Athenian like himself.

Alarmed at the renown which soon surrounded him in this solitude, St. Giles left the "double grotto" of the Guerdon and bade farewell to Veredemus, who soon afterwards became Bishop of Avignon. Whither did St. Giles retire? Ancient legend, based upon the *Acts* of the saints, says that he sought concealment in the Gothic forest about four leagues from Nîmes and an equal distance from Arles. But an ancient tradition of respectable credit lets us see him crossing the chain of the Pyrenees, which separates Southern Gaul from Spain, and settling as a hermit upon the mountains of *Nuria* in Catalonia. An ancient

GILES

manuscript attests the reality of the journey of St. Giles to Nuria and contains the history of a statue in wood of the Virgin, holding the infant Christ upon her knee, which St. Giles had carved with his hands and at the time of his departure had hidden in a grotto, where it was discovered in 1079. The name of St. Giles, which the grotto and the fountain, running not far off, still bear, concurs in attesting the truth of St. Giles' visit to Nuria. While St. Giles' humility explains his own silence, a Papal Bull of 1338 recognizes the truthfulness of the tradition.

St. Giles only resided for a short time in Spain and left for greater solitude. After several long journeys, he arrived at the verge of the Gothic forest (*Sylva Godesca*) where the palace of the Goths was. Here he settled in another grotto, called *la Baume de Saint-Gilles*, near a spring which is locally called *La Font Gilienne*, and which still runs between the village and the wood of *Ribasse*. It was in this solitude that St. Giles fixed his abode, and roots, herbs, and the milk of a hind, his faithful companion, sufficed for his frugal fare. The memory of that hind (*biche*) has been consecrated by Christian art; its figure has become the distinctive attribute of St. Giles, and the gracious and charming symbol passed at a later date into the arms of the city of Saint-Gilloise, as also of Edinburgh.

The question has been asked, was this forest, where St. Giles lived, the site of ancient Héraclée, a Greek town already vanished from the time of

Pliny, which was at the height of prosperity about 500 B.C., and the monuments of which both prove its existence and indicate its culture? It cannot be positively affirmed, but it is certain that its pagan temple was not far from the banks of the Little Rhone, although no document gives us the precise spot. However it be, this spot was inhabited first by Greeks and afterwards by Romans, and columns, which were afterwards used to build the basilica of St. Giles, with sarcophagi and other monuments, leave no doubt as to its early civilization, while the name, given before the Christian era to this harbour of the Rhone—*mutatio ponte aerario*—relates to the passage of the paying-bridge and indicates its later Roman possession. The invasions of the barbarians and Saracens must have made of these once cultivated places a desert, long before the time when St. Giles came there to live his life of austerity and prayer.

Did St. Giles inhabit the *Baume* already referred to and situated between the town of Saint-Gilles and the great structure of Espeiran? Some think that the saint may have lived in it by turns with another grotto in the crypt of the later church, to the left side of the confessionary. The remains there of a concave rock, still preserved, show that probably there, as well as at the *Baume*, lived the anchorite saint. He was not long to taste the sweets of solitude, for a meeting with Wamba put an end to his hermit life and led to his founding a monastery, of which he became first abbot.

GILES

After the bloody siege of Nîmes in 673, and accompanied by a great retinue, King Wamba desired to join the chase, and following a hind, which fled into the thicket, he shot an arrow at it and wounded the right hand of the saint, with which the hind was protecting herself. Moved with pity and seized with admiration at the presence of the hermit, whose youth breathed piety, Wamba gave to St. Giles the vast territory, which took the name of the Valley Flavian in remembrance of the royal donor, and expressed to him the desire of building there a monastery. The construction arose rapidly, and against the repugnance of the hermit the King prevailed. The hermit soon found himself at the head of a community. This religious settlement, presided over by St. Giles, must either have been the Benedictine Abbey of Nîmes, of Psalmodi or of St. Victor of Marseilles, but documents do not say which and the question must remain unsettled. Whichever it was, the Flavian Valley was to see a concourse of people, eager to enter the edifice raised by Wamba and to know the religious solitary, whose celebrity had spread far and wide. Disciples placed themselves under his pious direction, and thus was formed a flourishing community bound to the Benedictine rule, which for 800 years proved itself to be one of the pure glories of that order. In 684 the Abbey was duly constituted, and St. Giles went to Rome to gift it to the Holy See and to procure for it the privilege of exemption. The bull of Benedict II. (685)

takes under protection the monastery recently offered by St. Giles to the Church. The Abbot was to be elected by the monks and blessed by the Pope: excommunication of the monks by other ecclesiastical powers was forbidden as well as demand for their servitude. Doubt has been cast upon this bull on account of its formula being unusual in the seventh century, (*gracia Dei summus pontifex*)—by the grace of God supreme pontifex—the usual papal designation at this time being (*servus servorum Dei*)—*servant of the servants of God*,—but there is a reference to it in the bull of Pope John the VIIIth, belonging to the year 878. He therein confirms all the previous privileges and exempts the Abbot and Abbey of St. Giles from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Nîmes. He narrates its possessions as well as its previous favours, and both the papal bulls seem to confirm the visit of St. Giles to Rome.

At this period the Mussulmen appeared in South Gaul and made terrible raids—churches were destroyed, monasteries demolished, towns ravaged, houses pillaged, castles ruined, massacres took place and the earth was flooded with human blood.* St. Giles gathered the sacred vessels of the monastery and followed by all his disciples, sought refuge at Orleans under the powerful Charles Martel. There he led the king back to goodness and to God, and if we may believe the *Acta*, in the following way. “During the sojourn of the

* “*Acta Sanctorum*,” p. 293.

GILES

humble monk at the court of Charles Martel, the king committed a grave fault which he was not able to confess to any priest. He besought the prayers of St. Giles. It happened one day as the saint was conducting public prayer and had come to the point where he should pray for the king, an angel appeared and gave him a writing, in which the sin of the prince was revealed. That writing also testified that the sin of the prince was forgiven through the prayers of St. Giles, if the king repented of it and avoided repeating it. We read at the end of the scroll that whosoever would invoke St. Giles was sure to obtain pardon if he wished to amend. Prayer being ended, St. Giles sought the King and begged of him to think of his soul. The King, seeing the writing, fell at the knees of the saint, confessed his fault and received absolution."

Under the protection of this powerful patron, St. Giles returned to his monastery to await his death and reward from God, but in the Flavian Valley the sad sight of ruin dismayed him, where the Saracens had destroyed his church. But he had a powerful friend in Charles Martel, as well as a generous benefactor. Cloister and temple were rebuilt, and the saint could repeat with Job, "I shall die in the little nest (in nidulo meo moriar) which he has built for me" and sing with Simeon his "nunc dimittis." Full of years, he fell asleep on 1st September 721, and according to the *Acta* a heavenly revelation had apprised him

that his end was near. He announced this happy news to certain of his disciples and besought them to aid him by their prayers to prepare himself for the great journey from time to eternity. The death of the holy abbot was the worthy crowning of his life of abnegation, prayers and penitence, and to show how that death was precious in His eyes, God was believed to have permitted to His angels to honour with their most soothing melodies the passing of such a beautiful soul.

III. THE CULT OF ST. GILES

The disciples of St. Giles, who were Benedictines, buried his body in the primitive abbey dedicated by him to St. Peter. John VIII., in a bull of 878, authenticates this by referring to the Church of St. Peter, built by St. Giles and the King, Flavius Wamba. It is impossible to say when St. Giles received the honour of a public cult, but it may be inferred that it began shortly after his death in the abbey, which he had governed with so much wisdom. The assiduous witnesses appreciated his sanctity, and they were the first to render him a just homage. His sanctity became widely known, and his renown had solidly established itself within a hundred years of his death. The Flavian Valley soon became a place of pilgrimage; documents refer to him as "saint," and Charlemagne, in making a list of the monasteries within his vast territory, refers to that of St. Giles as the "Monastery of St. Egidius." Louis le De-

GILES

bonnaire mentions it also thus in 817, and divides the monasteries of his territory into three kinds: (*a*) those, which held their tenure on condition that they made gifts to the Emperor and furnished him with a certain number of soldiers, (*b*) others, which had to make gifts, but were not required to raise military service, and (*c*) those, which were free from these double obligations and had only the duty of praying for the Emperor, for his children and for the stability of the empire. The Abbey of St. Giles exercised a purely religious mission, and this document, says Stilting, authorizes us to believe that by 817 and probably in the preceding century, St. Giles was the object of a special cult in the church of the abbey, throughout the whole diocese of Nîmes and neighbouring people. The judgment of king and people was ratified by Pontiffs from John VIII. downwards, and in two bulls to the National Council of Troyes, the abbot Egidius is referred to as "blessed" (*bienheureux*) and "saint." The Assembly of fifty-two bishops ratified with one voice their unanimous homage to the virtues of the glorious St. Giles, and his tomb, referred to by Pope John VIII., in 878 became the resort of pilgrims. Pontiffs, kings and nobles granted privileges to the Church of St. Giles, and by 150 years after his death an aureole of glory surrounded his name. The Abbey had its own abbot; the Counts of Toulouse were frequently called Counts of St. Giles; the independence of the Abbey from the Bishop

of Nîmes was declared and Charles Martel and Pepin-le-Bref supported its work with constant protection and crowned it with temporal benefits. The Bishops of Nîmes had taken the title of "Abbots of St. Giles," and it is only in 878 that we find the first abbot appointed by the monks themselves—Léon by name.

By 924, on account of the invasion of the Hungarians, the body of St. Giles was translated to a larger church built for the convenience of pilgrims. By another hundred years, the tomb of St. Giles had proved the centre and goal of pilgrimages: thousands came from all parts of Europe, and by 1050, according to Mabillon, the pilgrimages to St. Giles' tomb took rank with those of St. Mary-Majeure, St. Peter at Rome, and St. James of Compostelle. A happy suggestion of Abbot Hugh (1106-1124) caused Peter William, the librarian of the Abbey, to write the *Liber Miraculorum Sancti Egidii* (the Book of the Miracles of St. Giles). A town formed itself around the abbey and became one of the most populous cities of France. It was a favourite rendezvous of the Crusaders, who loved to visit the tomb of St. Giles before going to war against the infidels.

IV. PILGRIMAGES TO ST. GILES' SHRINE

The situation of St. Giles' Town on a small arm of the Rhone, which furnished it with an accessible and safe harbour, may have stimulated the devotion, which during the eleventh and twelfth cen-

GILES

turies especially centred itself around the saint's shrine. It was a place destined by nature to be an early commercial centre, and Phœnician merchants early discovered it. Later it became one of the colonies of the Greek Town of Marseilles and was named Port d'Hercule. In the Middle Ages it kept the ancient name Héraclée, but took later the name of the saint and founder of the early abbey. The celebrity of the St. Giles cult, the fame of the pilgrimages, the prosperity of the commerce, the free and easy access of its port—one of the busiest in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—its particular laws and customs, so favourable to pilgrims and foreign merchants, and finally, the complete liberty for all its inhabitants to do commerce with all nations, contributed to augment its population and increase its prosperity. It is for all these causes that the Town of Saint-Gilles attained the zenith of its prosperity and became one of the greatest in Southern France. It was ecclesiastically divided into twelve parishes with seven churches around the Abbey of St. Giles.

Teissonier in his book on Saint-Gilles* states that the number of pilgrims, who in these ages of faith visited the tomb of the saint, were not children of the same people, as one might imagine; there were included among them, personages of the highest distinction. He cites from many instances the names of King Robert at the begin-

* pp. 64, 65.

ning of the eleventh century, the Counts of Toulouse (who possessed a palace and a mint-house in the place): the King of Poland and diverse embassies of Polish nobles: and in 1170, Philip, Count of Flanders, who made the pilgrimage with a great retinue of knights, and all eminent for their devotion. According to the conditions of a treaty in 1326, the inhabitants of Bruges and Courtrai were compelled to send 300 pilgrims to Saint-Gilles and to other popular sanctuaries such as Vauvert.

The customs and costumes of the pilgrims of the thirteenth century to St. Giles' shrine have been thus described. The traditional costume was completed by *ensigns* worn by the pilgrims and of which recent discovery has brought to light several interesting specimens. These *ensigns* were little images in metal, very often lead, and representing the saint whose sanctuary formed the goal of these pious pilgrimages. These *ensigns* were attached by the aid of small chains to the hat or dress of the pilgrim. One such was discovered at Paris in 1862, with the chain for fixing it. St. Giles is represented standing, covered with a chasuble decorated with arrows (*garnie de traits*) and holding in his left hand a cross. The hind or roe is at the right hand of the saint and to the left a kind of bush. Another find was made at Orleans in 1871 by the dredgers at work near the old bridge, proving the certainty of pilgrimages in the Middle Ages by people in the North to the

GILES

tomb of St. Giles. It is a medal, on which is engraved the figure of St. Giles, holding a cross in his hand and having the legendary hind at his side. Round the medal there is the inscription: *Sanctus Egidius*.

Numerous were the pilgrimages to St. Giles' church, but there is a specially interesting one given by Canon Nicolas, recently curé of the parish. It is founded on a manuscript in the Vatican Library, recently opened for the researches of scholars by the enlightened policy of Leo XIII. and Pius X. Here is the narrative. "Allosius, a noble Danish lord, had received and lodged for the love of God a poor man called Asgot, who had his legs paralysed. Allosius, returning from Saint-Gilles, told that he had seen many crutches and other votive offerings placed upon the shrine of the saint. He engaged then his guest to make the journey, paid his expenses and charged him to salute the abbot and monks, whom he asked to pray with the sick man for his healing. Asgot, arrived at Saint-Gilles, passed the first day in prayer and the following day, as he prayed anew, his limbs made movement and he left his crutches on the tomb of the saint."*

Another special example may be given from this age of faith. About 1079, Ladilas, Duke of Poland, and Judith of Bohemia his wife, sent an embassy to Saint-Gilles requesting the prayers of his church for an heir to the throne. When the

* "Saint-Gilles," p. 40.

prayer was answered, the prince was named Boleslas (born about 1085). After he succeeded his father, he made a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Giles in 1128 with much devotion and as a sign of his gratitude. The tradition of that pilgrimage has long lingered, for in 1851, a pious Pole, Count Alexander Przezdziecki, finding traces of the pilgrimage of Boleslas still surviving in the Archives du Gard, and desiring to transmit to posterity a remembrance that the birth of Boleslas was due to the prayer of St. Giles, presented to the church a beautiful ciborium, surmounted with the figure of St. Giles and a little cherub, both in prayer before the crucifix and modelled after an ancient seal of date 1185. The instance is typical of the early medieval piety, and reveals its atmosphere.

These circumstances favour the conclusion that in the Middle Ages the cult of St. Giles had spread throughout Christendom and that papal protection, shown towards the abbey, favoured the existence of the cult. It was at this time, as Mons. Teissonier points out, that fifteen saints, of whom St. Giles was one, were by preference invoked under special difficulties for special succour, even as he is still invoked in many of the parishes of Catholic Brittany to preserve from fire and epilepsy, and more frequently to save children from the terrors to which they are subject. One finds, too, in some of the ancient missals prayers addressed to certain honoured saints invoked together to the number of five and called the five blessed

GILES

privileged ones, of whom St. Giles was one (*les cinq bienheureux privilégiés*) even as other fifteen were called *Saints Auxiliateurs* (auxiliatores). It is true that this practice was abolished by the reform of the missal, but it proves none the less the celebrity of the cult of St. Giles. What again has never been abolished is the place which Urban IV. gave to St. Giles by canonising him in the liturgy of the Church in the thirteenth century.

V. CRUSADERS, HOSPITALLERS OF ST. JOHN, AND KNIGHT-TEMPLARS AT SAINT-GILLES

The Abbey of St. Giles is one of those included in the list presented in 817 to the Council of Aachen.* Copies of bulls and letters issued by Popes John VIII., Martinus I., Adrian III., Stephen V. and Sergius III. between the years 879-910 confirm the independence of the Abbey of St. Giles from the bishops of Nîmes. The pious contemplative who loved solitude and was characterised by humility during his lifetime, became a world-force; pilgrims were attracted in great numbers from all parts of Christendom to his tomb, and the town developed to meet the necessity for their accommodation on the spot. Its situation on a small arm of the Rhone, which furnished it with an accessible and safe harbour, stimulated the devotion which began after the death of the saint, and during the eleventh and twelfth centuries especially, is remarked by many writers. It

* "Gall. Christ.," vi. 481.

gradually dropped the ancient name of Héraclée and took the name of the founder of its celebrated abbey. It had by privilege the right of free commerce with all foreign nations, and its port, prior to the foundation of Aigues-Mortes by Louis IX., was of the greatest importance. "The marshes of Scamander and of Hermitane," says Lentheric, "formed to the south of the town a sure course, and the sailors of Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Tyre and Alexandria came to anchor almost under the walls of the ancient abbey, in that vast lagoon, since transformed by the progress of agriculture. Pope Urban II. in 1095 and 1096, Gelasius II. in 1118, Calixtus II. in 1119, Innocent II. in 1130, and Louis VII. in 1148, on his return from the Crusade, disembarked there: and it became, in the twelfth century, before the building of Aigues-Mortes, the most frequented point for embarking and disembarking by the convoys and the pilgrims of the Holy Land."*

Not far distant from the great road, which the Romans made from the Mediterranean to the English Channel, and furnished with a safe harbour, the town of Saint-Gilles became a centre for the concourse of nations, and the inspiration of the mighty religious cult of her saint spread its influence into all the countries of Europe, reaching England and Scotland. The three classes who helped in this were (*a*) pilgrims in general, (*b*) Crusaders, and (*c*) Knights Hospitallers and

* "Les villes mortes du Golfe de Lyon," p. 386.

Templars. The first class we have already considered, and it is with the Crusaders and the military orders we have now shortly to deal.

Pilgrimages to the scenes of our Lord's life and death had been in existence since the beginning of Christianity and increased after the persecutions had ceased and the Church had come into favour with the imperial power of Rome. From that time Christians began to visit the holy places in large numbers, travelling together for the sake of safety and society. Pilgrim caravans were encouraged by emperors such as Justinian, and they became so common that every large city in France and Italy provided itself with a hospital or hotel in Jerusalem or its neighbourhood for its own citizens, when on their visits there. In 614 the Persian invader of the Roman Empire took Jerusalem and slaughtered its inhabitants. It was recovered by the Emperor Heraclitus, but it only remained seven years in the hands of the Christians, for the forces of Mahomet were now spreading themselves all over the East and in A.D. 637 Jerusalem was compelled to surrender to the Caliph Omar, and with Judæa was in possession of the Caliphs and their successors for about four centuries. Pilgrimages were still made, but always under restrictions and persecutions, and about 1010 Hakem destroyed the churches and endeavoured to destroy the Holy Sepulchre itself. Under his successor the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was once more rebuilt, and in 1077 Jerusalem passed into the

possession of the Turks. This was the period, when many influences combined to originate the Crusades, and among them maybe mentioned the following. (1) There was a widely spread belief that after a thousand years had elapsed from our Lord's first advent, He was on the eve of appearing a second time at Jerusalem and that the millennium was about to begin. Pilgrimages increased, and with the Turkish rule their inevitable dangers and extortions by the Turks. (2) The Turks were exciting the fear that they would eradicate Christianity in Europe, even as they had done in Asia and Africa. Having secured Cyprus, Candia, Sicily, and Southern Italy, they extended their conquests to Spain and even invaded the South of France. It seemed as if they would before long secure Rome itself and found a Western Empire, such as had been known under the Roman Emperors, but with the religion of Mahomet as its dominating force. (3) In 1064, when the German Bishops of Mainz, Bamberg, Ratisbon, and Utrecht, followed by all ranks in society to the number of seven thousand persons, marched to Palestine, they were reduced to poverty and misery by the Mahometans, and in the following year two thousand survivors alone returned to their homes.

These circumstances all prepared the way for the movement, when Peter the Hermit arose and preached the First Crusade. He appeared as a pilgrim at Jerusalem in 1094, and witnessed the

persecutions practised on Christians by the Turks. Stirred in soul, he concerted with the Patriarch of Jerusalem a plan for securing the aid of European kings, bishops and people. It was successful through the arousing power of his eloquence as he traversed over Europe, and the pent-up emotions of the crowd expressed themselves in the cry *Deus vult* (God wills it). *Deus vult*, by the injunction of Urban, became the war cry of the enterprise, and everyone that embarked in it, wore as a badge the sign of the cross. Hence the name Crusade (French *croisade*, from Latin *crux*, "a cross").

An army of eighty thousand men started under the leadership of Peter the Hermit, but for want of proper arrangement, it was reduced by one-third through death and desertion as it passed through Hungary, and nearly the whole of the remainder perished under the walls of Nicæa. This dearly-bought experience led to a regular and efficient force being sent out under the generalship of Godfrey of Boulogne: his brother Baldwin: Hugo the Great, brother of the King of France, and Robert, son of William the Conqueror. The number of their armies amounted to 150,000 or 200,000 and this is called the *First Crusade* (1096). Nicæa, Laodicea and Antioch were taken, Christian rule was established in several important places and the Holy City was recovered. Godfrey was crowned King of Jerusalem, and at his death a year afterwards his brother Baldwin was elected

to succeed him. But the Kingdom of Jerusalem was but a garrison in an enemy's country, and the effect of this Holy War did not long abide. It aroused a wide-spread idealism and, says William of Malmesbury, "the most distant islands and savage countries were inspired with this ardent passion. The Welshman left his hunting, the Scotsman his fellowship with vermin, the Dane his drinking-party, the Norwegian his raw fish."

St. Bernard preached the *Second Crusade* in 1147 and a second expedition went forth. Treachery led to its failure, and only a small remnant returned to Europe. In 1187 Jerusalem was given up to Saladin, and has never since been recovered from the Mahometans. In the *Third Crusade* (1187-92) Richard Cœur-de-Lion was a conspicuous figure, and with the Emperor of Germany and the King of France united forces together for the invasion of Palestine, but jealousies and divisions arose and everything was ultimately left to Richard. The expedition ended in leaving the Holy City, as before, in the hands of the Mahometans. Four other crusades were undertaken in 1203, 1228, 1244 and 1270 respectively, and the two last of them were led successively by the good and brave St. Louis and by Edward of England, afterwards Edward I.

The Crusades did not obtain their object, but indirectly they had an important influence in opening up an extended commerce between nation and nation, in diffusing knowledge, in making

known highways of travel, in inspiring art, literature, and piety. They deepened religion as well, and brought the Divinely-Human Jesus side by side with the sacramental Christ. They colonised, created intellectual enrichment, reacted against national exclusiveness, fostered the passion for liberty, penetrated Europe with a great idealism, and prevented it becoming what the "Garden of the East" had become under Moslem rule. This may be best understood by a more modern comparison. The Elizabethan literature and Shakespeare's weighty contribution to it could not have come to birth in insular isolation: they form part of the mighty European literature of the Renaissance: they are steeped in foreign influence, and Shakespeare's mind possessed the fertility and had the power of absorbing not only his own wide reading but also of assimilating the vast influences that played upon it through the opening up of new lands and the tales which Elizabethan sailors brought from far-off shores. Shakespeare's mind has been likened to a highly sensitised photographic plate, which needed only to be exposed for the hundredth part of a second to anything in life or literature to receive upon its surface the firm outline of a picture, which could be developed and reproduced at will. So was it in this earlier period. A St. Bernard in the twelfth and a St. Francis in the thirteenth century would have been impossible apart from these great revivals, upheavals, and movements which the Crusades at

once fostered and expressed. No doubt, as Shakespeare puts it, "the web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and evil together," yet amid much that was superstitious, the Crusades created wider outlook and stirred moral and spiritual forces. Saint-Gilles was a favourite port of embarking and disembarking as far down as 1243: five or six crusades passed through its port and visited its shrine. They carried the cult of its saint far and wide, as well as erected churches to his name all over Europe. The distribution of his relics began in 1055 and they were associated with the propagation of his cult and a belief in the efficacy of his intercession.

We can only briefly deal with two Orders associated with Saint-Gilles, and whose origin may be traced to the necessities of the Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land. These reached Jerusalem often destitute and broken in health, and were attended in the hospitals by brothers, who were compelled in self-defence to assume the character of soldier and monk. Gerard, the founder of the Hospitallers, was a man of eminent sanctity and built a hospital for the sick near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and not far from the Church of St. John the Baptist. He was authorised to take St. John as the protector of his house, which was thus called the Hospital of St. John the Baptist. Some pious people gathered around him to engage in this work, and they were called Brothers (*frères*). A convent or sisterhood dedicated to

GILES

Mary Magdalen received the women, who came to visit the Holy Sepulchre. The Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem (the Knights of the Order of Malta) adopted a strict rule and were divided into three classes, knights, chaplains, and serving brothers. In times of peace the knights wore a black habit, with a white cross of the well-known shape called the Maltese Cross, having eight points. When fighting, the dress was red, with a great white cross before and behind. Numerous hospitals were established by them at seaport towns, whence pilgrims were assisted on their way to the Holy Land. The Order spread through Christendom, and inspired its chivalry. Gerard, after the capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders about 1099, landed at Saint-Gilles in 1101, where he bought outside the town, but near its walls, a piece of land where he and his followers constructed the Grand Priory of Saint-Gilles. The advantageous situation of the town, the free and easy access to its port, which made its commerce flourishing, the famous pilgrimages, all suggested to the Grand Master the thought of an Hospital for pilgrims, going and returning, and it was placed in dependence on the house at Jerusalem. Its head was called Prior, and it flourished for centuries. Thus the cult of St. Giles was again enriched by conjunction with the Knight-Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem and united itself with land and maritime movements.

The Knight-Templars, founded about 1118 at

Jerusalem, were also a military order, who spread throughout Europe and are still associated with the place-names of many countries, as well as with their romance and chivalry. They established themselves at Saint-Gilles in 1139, and in 1169 received permission to build a church and consecrate a cemetery. They were granted privileges and exemptions, and their house continued to the suppression of 1312, when the order was abolished by Philip le Bel and Clement V. Like the Hospitallers, the Templars discharged an international service, and their work was permeated with devotion at St. Giles' shrine and became part of a world-force, carrying his cult far beyond the limitations of Languedoc. The name of the saint became everywhere popularised, and in England alone there were 146 churches called by his name.

VI. THE BASILICA AT SAINT-GILLES

The Basilica comprehends both an upper church and crypt, and was begun in 1116 by Alphonso, son of Raymund IV., Count of Saint-Gilles, who was called Jourdain because he had been baptized in the Jordan. The crypt is vast and occupies all the subterranean portion of the nave. It forms a church under the upper church, and was formerly on a level with the cloisters on the south side. The central part over the tomb of St. Giles and of the south aisle are of an earlier date than the rest, and may be part of the earlier church consecrated

GILES

in 1096 by Pope Urban II. The construction was slow, and this explains the difference of execution in the vaults, which are very massive and are supported by huge pillars. The vaults are groined, and parts of the middle chapel are believed to belong to the period of Charlemagne. Altogether the crypt vindicates the assertion that at one time Saint-Gilles "was the grandest church in the South of France." The interior of the upper church was originally formed of a nave of eight bays with aisles, a choir with apse, and a semicircular east-end, surrounded by chapels. Only five bays of the upper church remain. These have been lowered, except one at the east end of the north aisle, which retains its original lofty pitch (62 feet), the vault of the nave having been 90 feet. The piers have been shortened, and some of the very fine original capitals have been replaced upon them.

The lower part of the west front is the greatest glory of the church, and belongs to the end of the twelfth century. The façade and the wonderful porch form finest examples of South of France sculpture. Beyond all praise is the variety of the sculptural subjects which encircle the three doorways, adorn the tympanums, and fill all the parts of the arch stones. The large figures of the portal represent the twelve apostles: the basement is ornamented with lions, projecting a little in relief, of good execution and of living art. The tympanum of the central door has a Christ of the type called "En Majesté," and with a glory

nimbus. This belongs to the first years of the thirteenth century, and there are traces in it of the Lombard School and of Italian artists. There is originality in the work and a personal inspiration as well. Less solemn and more diverse than those of St. Trophime's Cathedral at Arles, the portals of Saint-Gilles are more *living* and precious from the point of view of the history of art. The carving of the image work is more flexible and the imagination more fertile. The lower part of the west front is principally of white marble, and as the abbots of Saint-Gilles, powerful seigneurs in ancient days, used to sit at the gate of the church to dispense justice, many of the old charters begin with the words "Domino N. N. sedente inter leones." In the vestibule of this church Raymond VI., Comte de Toulouse, accused of favouring the persecuted Albigenses, underwent in 1209 the ignominious penance of being scourged on his back in the presence of the Papal legate and twelve French Bishops.

A detached pile of ruin behind the actual church was the north-east tower, which escaped destruction in the sixteenth century: it contains a spiral staircase, called the Vis de Saint-Gilles, celebrated for its masterly construction as a piece of masonry. It was saved from destruction at the Reformation and again at the Revolution.

In a narrow street facing the church is an old house of the twelfth century, ornamented with very perfect sculptured work, and said to be that

GILES

inhabited by Pope Clement IV., a native of Saint-Gilles. He was educated at the school of the Abbey and became an eminent lawyer, who was the friend and counsellor of St. Louis. One of his reported sayings is, "The judge ought to listen to the voice of the advocate, but the advocate ought to be more attentive still to the voice of conscience." He was Pope from 1165 to 1168, and was noted for being an enemy of nepotism. He also encouraged Roger Bacon.

The Abbey was secularised by Pope Paul IV. in 1538: the upper church was demolished in part by the Duc de Rohan in 1622, and the Huguenots found it no longer tenable as a fort in 1562. It suffered much from the religious wars and was for centuries neglected. The rubbish was cleared from the beautiful crypt and the tomb of St. Giles once more discovered in 1865. The piety of pilgrims leads many to it again, and art-students are attracted by the glorious crypt overarching this historical centre.*

VII. SAINT-GILLES AND AIGUES-MORTES

The South of France was the scene of early contests for the Christian faith, and scholars are agreed that the *Quicunque Vult*, which is a canticle or psalm, but not a creed, was written there if not in Spain in the sixth century. The fifth century in Southern Europe was a time of appal-

* "De Nîmes et Du Gard," pp. 54, 55: "Saint-Gilles," pp. 181-194: Murray's "Handbook for France," pp. 161-170. "Dictionary of Christian Biography," i. pp. 47-49.

ling disasters, and in addition to pestilence and famine, to floods and earthquakes, the Northern tribes were bursting through the barriers of the Old Roman Empire and pouring west and south through France, Spain, and North Africa. These Goths and Vandals had adopted an heretical form of Christianity; they were Arians, and persecuted Catholic Christians with furious fanaticism. "Arianism or death" was the alternative, and it was an age of horrors and terrors, when men's hearts failed them for fear. It was then and there that processional Litanies sprang up, and we still have in the English Litany the echo of that awful time. When men pray for defence "from lightning and tempest: from plague, pestilence and famine: from battle and murder and from sudden death," they are repeating the intense prayer of these early Christians in South France. But even miseries were more tolerable than the trial of their faith. The Arians denied the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Church, the Trinity and Incarnation. The Christians of the South of France, Spain, and North Africa felt like soldiers set to guard the colours of their regiment, and with amazing courage and constancy they faced the storm and preserved the faith in Southern Europe.

The *Quicunque Vult* may be regarded as a war-cry, a manifesto, a declaration of faith; it was a sacred Marseillaise, and reminds us at what a price Christianity was preserved in Europe when it was swept away in Africa, Syria, and Asia Minor.

GILES

Arianism had no root in vital truth, and was incapable of resisting Mohammedanism. To the heroes for whom the *Quicumque Vult* was written, Christendom owes everything. Read thus historically, it is no stumbling-block, but an historical monument to the faith.

If this great psalm is the symbol of the early Christian centuries in France, architecture may be taken as a symbol of the struggles of later centuries against the Saracens, who again threatened to overrun Europe with Mohammedanism. The Crusades with their romantic idealism sprung into being, and all along the shores of the Mediterranean, in Southern France or Provence, there are monumental evidences and place-names, which still speak of red-hot martyrdom and struggles for the faith. Two symbols we take of this: (1) *The Church of Les Saintes-Maries* on the coast of the *Camargue*. With its small windows, battlements, and tower, the church in its outward aspect represents a fortress, but its interior is reverent, devout, graceful Gothic, which arouses worship. Both aspects combined, represent the Church in struggle, yet conquering that struggle in faith. The other symbol we take is that of *Aigues-Mortes*, connected with the Mediterranean by canals. It was founded in 1243 or 1246 by St. Louis of France, who bought the land from the Abbey of Psalmodi and embarked here for his two crusades in 1244 and 1270. In 1267-9 he began, and in 1270-75 his son, Philip the Bold, completed the

fortifications, which are even superior to those of Carcassonne and Avignon, being uniform in style and all of one date. The famous *Tour de Constance*, containing St. Louis' private chapel, is at the north-west angle, and with the vast square enceinte, speaks of Christian chivalry in its early period.

Aigues-Mortes and the church of Les Saintes-Maries are the symbols of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries' faith-religion, united with chivalry and both combined in defence against Mohammedanism. Saint-Gilles had been the seaport prior to 1243, but after that time there closes for Saint-Gilles the period of its grandeur. Its port became deserted in favour of that of Aigues-Mortes: the Crusaders changed their course and Saint-Gilles fell into the rank of a small town. The cult of its saint chiefly flourished in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

VIII. THE AREA OF THE ST. GILES' CULT

St. Giles early became the patron of lepers, beggars and cripples, and his cult spread quickly over England, France and Germany, Poland and Hungary. From his refusal to be cured of an accidental lameness that he might be enabled to mortify himself more completely, he was esteemed as the patron especially of cripples. Numberless monasteries and churches were dedicated to him: manuscripts in prose and verse commemorated his virtues, and, as we have already seen, pilgrims from all parts of Europe flocked to his shrine.

GILES

Besides the city of Saint-Gilles, which sprang up around his abbey, nineteen other cities bore his name. Saint-Gilles, Toulouse, and a multitude of French cities; Antwerp, Bruges, Tournai in Belgium; Cologne and Bamberg in Germany; Prague and Gran in Austria-Hungary; Rome and Bologna in Italy, possess relics of St. Giles. Among dedications, Stilling mentions Liège, St. Hubert in the Ardennes, Sentiges in Hungary, St. Quentin in Picardy, Bamberg, Brunswick, Munster and Nuremberg. During the religious wars, the relics of St. Giles were transferred to Toulouse and deposited in the Church of St. Sernin. Pope Urban IV. added to the honour of the saint by giving his office a place in the Roman Breviary as a semi-double; but since the middle of the sixteenth century it has been reduced to a simple office. St. Giles, whose name was received into the English Martyrologies subsequent to the time of Bede, still retains a place in the reformed English Calendar: the Sarum Epistle and Gospel were Eccles. xxxix. (5-9): St. Luke xi. (33-36).^{*} His festival is kept on September 1. Giles is a common Christian name, especially in Belgium, and it occurs frequently as a surname both in France and England. It may be of interest to note that the daughter of James, 5th High Steward or Stewart (died 1309), was named Egidia or Giles, and many of his descendants afterwards, including Egidia "a very beautiful lady" daughter of

^{*} "Dictionary of Christian Biography," i. 49.

Robert II., who married Sir William Douglas of Nithsdale.

"St. Giles was the patron saint of the woodland," says Mrs. Jameson, "of lepers, beggars, cripples: and of those struck by some sudden misery and driven into solitude like the wounded hart or hind."* There are 146 churches in England dedicated to St. Giles. These are frequently near the outskirts of a city or town: St. Giles, Cripplegate, St. Giles in the Fields, St. Giles, Camberwell were all on the outside of London, as it existed when these churches were erected, and there are other examples at Oxford, Cambridge, &c. St. Giles, Cripplegate, for instance, was before the Conquest a rendezvous for cripples and beggars, who were accustomed to solicit charity at the entrance of the city. In Oxford, Cambridge, and many other places a church at the entrance of the town is dedicated to St. Giles. Every county in England except Westmoreland and Cumberland has churches named in his honour, and Werrington in Devon is named after SS. Martin and Giles conjointly.† In 1117 Matilda, the Queen of King Henry I., founded a hospital for lepers without the wall of the City of London, under the invocation of St. Giles. It gave its name to the parish in which it was situated, and afterwards became a cell to the hospital of Burton S. Lazarus of Jerusalem. The master and brethren of St. Giles used

* "Sacred and Legendary Art," ii. 769.

† Parker's "Calendar of the Anglican Church," p. 106.

GILES

formerly to present a bowl of ale to every felon as he passed their gate on his way to Tyburn.* St. Giles was regarded as the patron or tutelary saint of Edinburgh, and St. Giles' Church in Rome used to be much frequented by women before childbirth.†

IX. ST. GILES IN ART

St. Giles is commemorated with another St. Giles—an Italian hermit of the tenth century—and a blessed Giles, who died about 1203, a Cistercian Abbot of Castañeda, in the diocese of Astorga, Spain.‡ Their day is the first of September, and it must be of the Cistercian Giles that Mrs. Jameson writes: § “He is represented as standing in a transport of religious ecstasy before Pope Gregory IX. The picture, which was painted by Murillo for the Franciscan convent at Seville, is now, I believe, in England.”

The St. Giles, with whom this short treatise deals, is generally represented as an aged man in the dress of a Benedictine monk, a long black tunic, of loose sleeves, and a hind, pierced by an arrow, is either in his arms or at his feet.

“Ane Hynde set up beside Sanct. Geill.”

Sometimes the arrow is in his bosom and the hind is fawning on him. Sometimes the habit is white in pictures, which date subsequently to the

* “Justorum Semita,” ii. 382–385.

† “Mirabilia Romæ,” p. 38.

‡ “Acta Sanctorum,” xli. 308; “Catholic Dictionary,” vi. 559, 560.

§ “Sacred and Legendary Art,” ii. 769.

period, when the Abbey of Saint-Gilles became the property of the Reformed Benedictines, who had adopted the white habit. Representations of St. Giles are seldom met with in Italy, but very frequently in early French and German Art.* He is usually represented with a crosier, and a hind with its head or its fore feet in his lap, sometimes having its neck pierced with an arrow. In Callot's Images, the hind is by his side, and an arrow has pierced the saint in the thigh, and other representations have the arrow in his breast.† As he was publicly honoured since the ninth century, representations are numerous. While generally depicted with a long white beard, a drawing of the saint after Albert Dürer represents him as unbearded and with his hand pierced by an arrow.‡ In the carved representation above the western doors of St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, the saint is depicted in the Benedictine habit with a book in his left hand, the hind in his lap and an arrow through his right hand. In the National Gallery at London there is a magnificent painting upon wood and belonging to the Flemish School of the fifteenth century. It is the first part of a diptych representing St. Giles at the *Baume* in the presence of King Wamba, and in the distance is the city of Saint-Gilles. Canon Nicolas, the historian of the city, rejoices in it as for him a great discovery (*une grande révélation*), for the back-

* "Sacred and Legendary Art," ii. p. 770.

† Parker's "Calendar of the Anglican Church," p. 106.

‡ Mrs. Jameson's "Legends of the Monastic Orders," p. 201.

GILES

ground enabled him to locate the boundaries of the seven ancient parish churches of Saint-Gilles.*

X. ST. GILES, EDINBURGH (CHURCH, COLLEGE, AND CATHEDRAL)

As early as 854, Edinburgh possessed its parish church, but by whom, or under what circumstances it was built is not known. It may have been dedicated to St. Giles, although it is rather doubtful, since the St. Giles' cult came to its own pre-eminently, as we have seen, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It is to this period the dedication may be assigned, and as a new church in lieu of this original one was erected in the early part of the twelfth century by Alexander I. (1107-1124), we may with some certitude aver that it was this structure which was connected with St. Giles as the patron saint. Pilgrimages from Scotland were prior to Alexander's reign frequent to Saint-Gilles, and the first Crusade (1096) had aroused much of the knight chivalry of Scotland as of other countries. The Hospitallers' and Templars' † movements had also appealed to the Scottish nobles, and on their return home they must have popularised by their narrations the cult of St. Giles. This has been discussed in a previous chapter, ‡ and all these forces must be considered in this period as influential if not paramount. The St. Giles' cult was associated with the maritime

* "Saint-Gilles," p. 137.

† pp. 34-36.

‡ ch. v.

and land movements of the times, and the saint's fame spread with them, as we have just seen. Pilgrims, Crusaders, Hospitallers, and Templars brought back stirring tales of the saint's original shrine, which they visited on their way to the Holy Land, and in these days when religion was the all and in all of life, what more natural than that the Scottish King should connect his church, then in process of erection within his Scottish capital, with the name of St. Giles? Yet he was probably inspired by another influence. The King had married Sibylla, a natural daughter of King Henry I. of England, and his Queen Matilda had founded in 1117 a hospital for lepers, without the wall of the City of London, under the invocation of St. Giles.* The Scottish Queen's influence would most naturally be directed towards doing in Scotland what Matilda had attained in England, and taking a conjoint view of the times and the forces at work in them, there seems a very great probability if not a certitude in averring that it was in the reign of Alexander I. that the Parish Church of Edinburgh was dedicated to St. Giles,† the French, and not a Scottish, saint. Alexander I. founded also the Abbeys of Scone and Inchcolm. When David I. (1124-1153) founded Holyrood

* See p. 44.

† Fairs were formerly held in honour of St. Giles at Moffat, and also at Elgin, where the parish church bore his name. Elgin was a parsonage dedicated to St. Giles and was the bishop's pastoral charge (Shaw's "Province of Moray," p. 65). It is presumed that the Saint Giles' Church, Elgin, was built between the years 1180 and 1200 ("Elgin Past and Present," p. 238).

GILES

Abbey in 1128, he endowed it by a later charter with the Church of the Castle, the Church of St. Cuthbert under the Castle wall, and the Chapels of Corstorphine and Liberton, but at this period there were lands lying to the south of Edinburgh, which bore the name of St. Giles' Grange—so called from being the Grange of the vicar of St. Giles' Church. These lands were gifted by King David I. to the English Abbey of Holm Cultram or Harehope in Cumberland, and probably the Church went along with them. The point, however, is, that they were known as *St. Giles'* Grange, and in all probability this arose from the dedication of the Church in the previous reign. Fordun calls them "Sant Gilysis Grange," and the name confirms the probability that the Parish Church of Edinburgh was dedicated to St. Giles in the twelfth century by King Alexander I. and his Queen Sibylla.

The church of Alexander I. stood on the north-west portion of the present site and had a choir and a nave, with small side aisles and a central tower, but it was almost entirely demolished in 1385, when Richard II. burnt the city. A doorway of it on the north side survived, and was unfortunately destroyed in 1797 or 1798. Nothing seems to have been left except probably the three octagonal pillars on each side of the west end of the choir with their arches and the wall about the entrance to the Royal Pew. A building on a larger scale proceeded, and in 1387 a contract was en-

tered into for the construction of five vaulted chapels on the south side of the nave. These remained intact till 1829, when two to the west were demolished, and the others form the present south aisle. The Albany Aisle on the north-west of the nave was added and the chapel of St. Eloi* to the west of the north transept was probably also added about the same time. About 1460 the choir was enlarged to the east, partly at the royal expense, since the King's Pillar bears shields on which are the arms of King James II., of his wife Mary of Gueldres, and of his son Prince James. The other extension was on the south side, in what is known as the Preston Aisle. It receives its name from William Preston of Gortoun, who "had with diligent labour and great expense and aided by a high and

* The parish of St. Nicholas at Saint-Gilles was after 1381 and the English wars named the church and parish of St. Eloi—Eloi or Elidius being a canonised Bishop of Noyon and Apostle of Flanders. He was originally a goldsmith, and as such became a patron of goldsmiths and hammermen. Pilgrims who died at the Hospice were buried in his cemetery at Saint-Gilles. The carters and smiths' confraternity endowed an altar at his church in 1443 ("Saint-Gilles," p. 128), and in 1496 the craft of hammermen endowed his altar at St. Giles' Church, Edinburgh. In this chapel a banner called the Blue Blanket was hung up. It is supposed to have been carried during the wars of the Crusades. "Vast numbers of Scots mechanics," Pinkerton states, "having followed in this holy war, taking with them this banner, upon their returning home and glorying that they were amongst the fortunate who placed the Christian standard of the Cross in the place that Jesus Christ had consecrated with His blood, dedicated this banner, which they styled the Banner of the Holy Ghost, to St. Eloi's altar in St. Giles' Church in Edinburgh, which from its colour was called the Blue Blanket" (Pinkerton's "History of the Blue Blanket"). This statement at any rate preserves a tradition of some connection between Scotland and France, and the identity of altars at Saint-Gilles Church in France and St. Giles in Edinburgh, is suggestive of forgotten or buried history.

GILES

mighty prince, the King of France and many other Lords of France, succeeded in obtaining possession of the arm-bone of St. Giles, and this relic had been freely bequeathed by him "to our mother kirk of Sanct Gell of Edynburgh without any condicion."* It is interesting here to observe that the Kirk was not named "St. Giles' Kirk" because it now possessed a relic of the saint, but the relic was brought because it was already named St. Giles' Kirk. The provost, bailies, and community of Edinburgh voluntarily undertook to commence within one year (after January 1455) and to complete in the space of six or seven years an aisle "furth fra our Lady Isle where the said William lyis" to erect there his monument with a brass tablet, with his arms and an inscription narrating his gift of the relic. His arms were also to be put on hewn stone in three parts of the aisles, also an altar, and to endow a chaplain to sing for him from that time forth and "granting to his nearest relations the privilege of carrying the relique on all public processions." The aisle remains to this day, but the relic has disappeared.

In 1466 St. Giles was by a charter of James III. converted into a Collegiate Church with a provost, a dean, sixteen prebendaries, a master of the choir, four choristers, a sacristan and a beadle, together with a number of chaplains to attend to the thirty-six altars of the church. The charter of erection

* "Charters," 1143-1540, p. 79.

was in 1466, but it is not called Collegiate till 1475—the College Kirk of St. Geill of Edinburgh. Just before the death of James IV. it received the last Pre-Reformation addition—a chapel off the south-west corner of the Preston Aisle founded by Walter Chapman for the prosperity of the King and Queen and the benefit of his own soul. Chapman was called the Scottish Caxton, from his having introduced into Scotland the art of printing in 1507, and the chapel was dedicated to St. John the Evangelist within a month of King James' death at Flodden. Then came the storm at the Reformation, when the College with its glorious crown became once more a parish church, subdivided again until 1633, when Charles I. created Edinburgh a bishopric and St. Giles a cathedral. Jenny Geddes' action aroused the city and country, and the Episcopate came to an end in 1638. It was restored at the Restoration, and after the Revolution settlement the church became a parish church, with subdivisions. The "Restoration" of 1829 left the tower and crown unscathed, and the glorious restoration under Dr. William Chambers' munificence was effected between 1870 and 1883, when the Cathedral was opened up from end to end. The Thistle Chapel has recently been added, and St. Giles is known as the temple of conciliation. Its great crown still recalls the French residences of its saint, and is regarded as the work of Scottish architects on a French model. In the great work of Scottish re-

GILES

ligion, St. Giles' Cathedral may be called the Scottish Westminster,* and is the glory of the Scottish Capital.

XI. ST. GILES AND THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION

It was always a wound to Scottish patriotism that at the battle of Neville's Cross (17th October 1346) the Scottish Standard was captured with the Holy Cross of Holyrood Abbey. It had been preserved in Holyrood Abbey from 1128 till the date of this engagement, and it was carried into the battle under the instructions of the Scottish king, together with the Black Rood of Scotland. They were won by the English and placed on St. Cuthbert's altar at Durham Cathedral. They were regarded as talismen on the battle-field, and were annually carried around the town of Durham at the procession on St. Cuthbert's Day (20th March). Along with the corporax cloth, the English regarded them as trophies of St. Cuthbert's cult, and the presence of the Scottish Standard and Black Rood on these annual occasions was a constant irritant to Scottish feeling. The Black Rood of Scotland was made of silver, "being as it were smocked all over" and "ornamented with representations of the Virgin and St. John."† The Scots desired and on many unsuccessful occasions tried to win it back, and even the Cathedral at Durham

* Lee's "St. Giles," Laing's "Registrum Cartarum," Mrs. Smith's "Grange of St. Giles," MacGibbon & Ross' "Ecclesiastical Architecture," ii. 419-455, Knox's Works, vols. i. and ii.

† Sanderson's "Durham," p. 28.

itself appeared to them as "half church of God, half castle 'gainst the Scot."

Edinburgh, if reminded of ancient enmity with England by St. Cuthbert's celebrations at Durham, was also recalled to the frequently kind relationship with France on the day of its own patron saint—the 1st of September. Then it had annually, since probably the twelfth century, its solemn procession through the streets of Edinburgh, and a figure of St. Giles, carved in wood and the size of life, was always a conspicuous object on the occasion. On such occasions it was customary to deck the figure of the saint. This had continued for long, and it was a striking blend of a religious cult with patriotism. In 1558, notwithstanding the progress which the Reformed opinions had made, it was agreed to celebrate this festival with more than ordinary solemnity, and heretics, instead of being sent to the flames on the castle hill, were reserved to form part of the procession and to abjure their opinions, while the Queen Regent was to favour it by her presence. The Burgh Records (vol. ii.) contain references to the procession on St. Giles' Day, to the display of St. Giles' arm on relic Sunday, to expenses for musicians playing on the saint's festival, to tuning the organs for and for leading the bull on the occasion. In the Dean of Guild's Accounts there are sums paid "for paynting of Sanct Gell," "for mending and polishing Sanct Gelis arm," and "for mending of Sanct Gelis capis."

GILES

Previous to September 1, 1558, Knox states that "the images were stollen away in all parts of the country: *and in Edinburgh was that great idoll called Sanct Geyle* first drowned in the North Loch, after burnt, which raised *no small trouble* in the Town." Sir James Balfour in his Annals says this image was a "gratellog of wood or idoll, which the priests called Sant Geilles." "The trouble referred to," says Dr. David Laing, "was no doubt the injunction of the Archbishop of St. Andrews to have this image replaced: and various payments by the City Treasurer in 1557-8 refer to the appellation by the Town of Edinburgh against the sentence of Archbishop Hamilton, obliging the Town to have the image of St. Giles replaced. From this we may infer that the image had been stolen in the year 1557."*

Knox gives an amusing and minute account of the tumult that ensued,† but Bishop Lesley is much more concise. After mentioning the circumstance that several persons had been accused of heresy at a Convocation or Provincial Council of the whole Prelates and Clergy assembled at Edinburgh at the end of July, he adds, "bot nane was executed or punished in thair bodeis, bot ordanit to abjure thair errouris at the Mercatt Croce of Edinburgh, upoun Sainct Gelis Day, the first of September: bot thair was so gret a tumult rased that day on the Hie Street of Edinburgh, that thay quha war appointed to do open penance

* Knox's Works, i. 560.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 258-261.

war suddantlie careid away and the hail proce-
sioun of the Clergie disperced: the image of Sanct
Geill being borne in processione, was taikin per-
force fra the beraris thair of brokin and distroyed:
quhairwith the Queene Regent was heichlie of-
fendit: and for stanchinge of the lyk trouble in
tyme cuming, she appointed the Lorde Setoun
to be provest of the Toun of Edinburgh, quha
keepit the same in resonable guid ordour quhill
the nixt symmer thairefter.”*

The St. Giles' cult never recovered from the
degradation of that day, and the Scottish Reformation
swept like a tornado over the country. The riots of 1558
brought it to an end, and in June 1562 the magistrates
directed the portraiture of the saint, which had served as
their emblem, to be cut out of the City Standard *as an idol*,
and a Thistle to be inserted, “emblematic,” says the
author of *Caledonia*, “of rude reform, but leaving
the Hind which accompanied St. Giles, as one of
the heraldic supporters of the City arms.” The
images were stolen from the church: the St. Giles
arm-bone,† so precious before, is supposed to have

* History, p. 266.

† In the process of transforming the east aisle of the north transept of St. Giles into a memorial chapel in honour of the restorer, Dr. William Chambers, an arm-bone was found deposited under the flooring of what, after the Reformation, had been appropriated to the use of the Dean of Guild, the custodian of the desecrated relic, when it was despoiled of its silver-work. Some markings on the bone were thought to indicate traces of its artificial setting, and it was thought to be the veritable arm-bone of St. Giles. A St. Giles' arm-bone had in 1554, or four years before St. Giles' festival at Edinburgh was celebrated for the last time, been presented to St. Giles' Church at Bruges. A letter was written to the Bishop of Bruges by Archbishop Smith of

GILES

been thrown into the adjacent churchyard: the church was pillaged and the altars destroyed: the jewels, silver-work, vestments, and other articles belonging to the church were sold by the authority of the magistrates, and the proceeds were spent on repairs. The name of St. Giles was dropped, and the church was named the High Church of Edinburgh, of which John Knox was the first Reformed minister.

All things have their end.

Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,
Must have like death, that we have.

Retrospect

It is impossible to read the last chapter without feeling that the St. Giles' cult had degenerated, and that the deepest instinct of the sixteenth century had revolted against the idolatry that had become connected with it. It started as spiritual, had become materialised, and superstition had grown around it. It is ours now to separate the true from the false, and the true stands forth in a personality of gracious tenderness, humility, contemplativeness and noble service, whose life was a reaction against his age and spoke to mediæval men of a larger, fairer world than that in which they lived. After his death, they gathered around his tomb and felt afresh the glow of his life: they dedicated

Edinburgh, asking for information concerning the relic of St. Giles, which is one of the treasures of the Cathedral there. A reply stated "that the bone preserved there is the left arm-bone of the saint." As the St. Giles' find was also a left arm-bone, the message from Bruges makes the task of identification one of additional difficulty (Wilson's "Edinburgh Memorials," ii. 223).

their churches to his memory and believed that in the heavenly home he was still with them, and they sought his prayers as those of a just man, who prevailed with God. St. Giles seemed to them to belong to the "long cloud of witnesses," who are seen watching their successors as they run their earthly course, and are assuredly permitted to be cognisant both of them and their path. They thought that the mediatorial functions of our exalted Lord embraced this mediation also, and that in Him and by Him such manifestations may well be given, if it was for His glory and their good. They brought to his shrine their cripples, their lepers, believing that their care and cure were his mission, and their prayer of faith was to them often answered of God. The piety of the heart was aroused by the associations of the temple and to the believing devotion the grace of God approached. And has not the Conference of the clerical and medical professions in St. Paul's Chapter-house just issued its report on *Spiritual Healing* and told us that they can conceive of no limitations to the exercise of the power of God in stirring the inborn spirit of man to higher and fuller life, and in inspiring courage and hope to resist morbid conditions of the body: that the operation of the Divine power can be limited only by the Divine Will and that prayer is efficacious; that in regard to the healing of disorders of mind and body, increasing benefits are being secured for mankind through human instrumentality, and

GILES

that the physical results of "faith" or "spiritual" healing do not prove to be different from those of mental healing or healing by "suggestions"? Are not they also calling for a defined relationship and its co-operation between ministers of religion and members of the medical profession in the healing of disease? If the cult of St. Giles stood for the ministry of healing in days when medical science was in its infancy, is it not ours to unite with science the prayer of faith? and to recognise in science God's own gifts, which He has granted for the blessings of the age? Does it make one atom of difference, so far as our thought and compassion for the sick are concerned, whether the wonder of healing be through a word of Divine command or through the agency of God-given knowledge, invention, and experience? God is in all and it is ours to recognise it, while we cannot in thought any more than in reality, limit His power or the occasion of His working. Assuredly there are cases where the *vis medicatrix naturæ* could not have been the agent. The future will assuredly see a greater co-operation between science and religion, and the dim truth, underlying the ancient cults, such as that of St. Giles, will be reconciled with reverent thought and broadening knowledge.

For over 400 years, the prayer for healing was offered up at St. Giles' shrine in Edinburgh, and we must believe that the *faith* in the prayer was answered in God's best hour and way: and is it not a significant fact that near this ancient

SAINT GILES

church there now stands the great University of Edinburgh with its world-famous Medical Faculty, with its great Infirmary, medical schools and hospitals? Is it not God's answer to prayer as well as God's revelation of Himself in skill, knowledge, and nursing, ever advancing and ever expanding? To think so is to recall the Eternal Spirit behind all phenomena, and to link the ages with a gracious piety. It is to behold the ever-broadening purpose of God and to unite science with faith in the great arena within which He is working. The old faith lives in the clearer light of to-day, and men will ever call the ancient church of Edinburgh, *the Cathedral of St. Giles*, thereby preserving the symbol of the ancient pieties, linking the present with the past, and science with the tender humanity and winsome graciousness of this early saint, who was contemporaneous with St. Cuthbert, son of Iona (636-687 A.D.).

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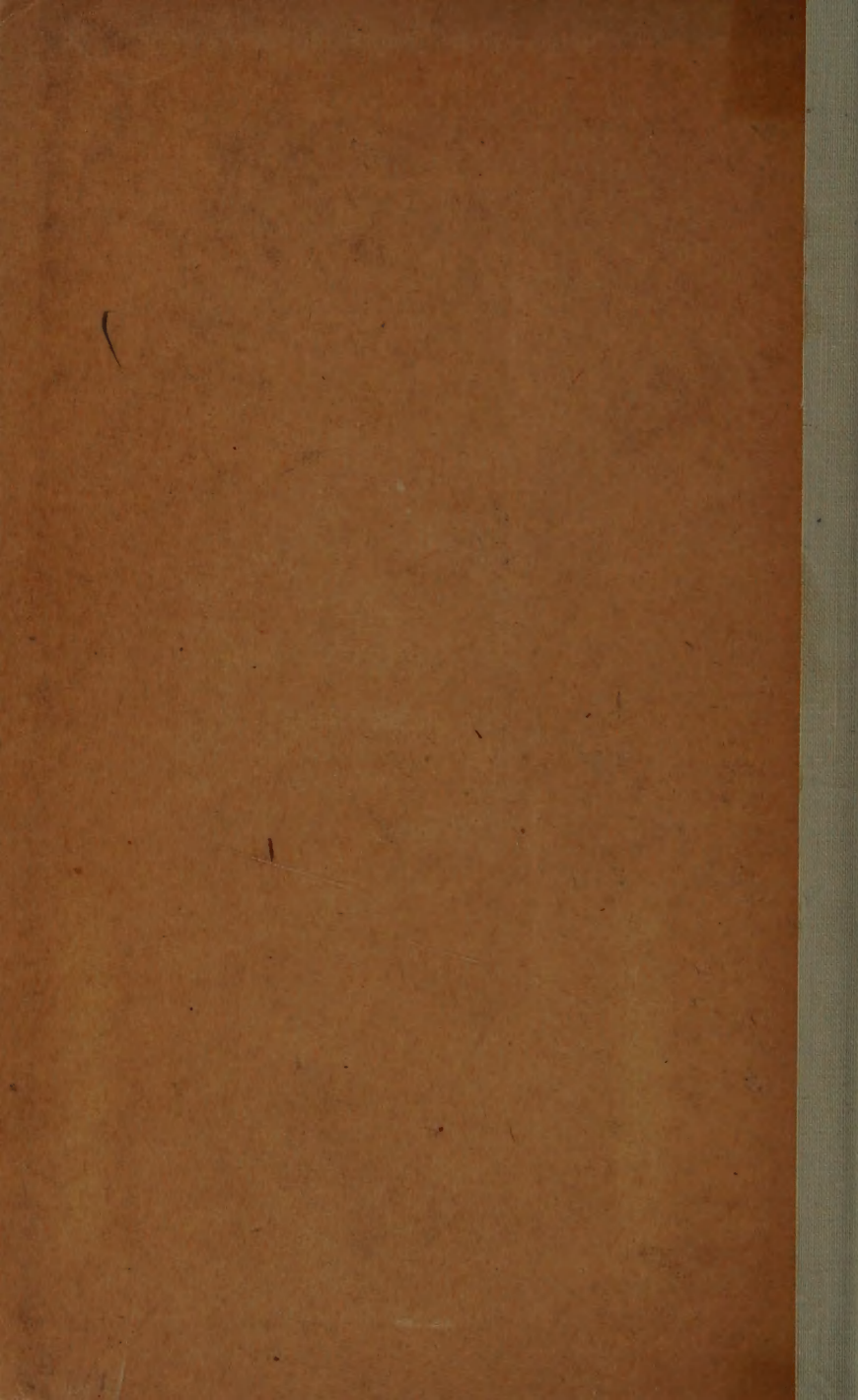
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